

# *PRESS RELEASE*

## *United States Marine Corps*

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### **SENIOR MARINE OFFICERS SANCTIONED FOR HADITHA INCIDENT**

HEADQUARTERS MARINE CORPS, Washington D.C. -- Three Marine officers have been administratively sanctioned for their actions associated with the subsequent reporting and investigation of the deaths of 24 Iraqi citizens in Haditha, Iraq, on Nov. 19, 2005.

Maj. Gen. Richard A. Huck, former commanding general of the 2nd Marine Division, has received a letter of censure from the Secretary of the Navy for the actions he took and failed to take in response to the circumstances surrounding a battlefield incident in Haditha on Nov. 19, 2005.

Col. Stephen W. Davis, former commanding officer, Regimental Combat Team – 2, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division, has received a letter of censure from the Secretary of the Navy for his failure to take appropriate action when informed about the incident in Haditha.

Col. Robert G. Sokoloski, former chief of staff, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division (Forward), has received a letter of censure from the Secretary of the Navy for his unsatisfactory performance of duty relative to the Haditha incident.

As required by service regulations, the letters of censure will be filed in the officers' official military records.

On June 6, 2006, Lt. Gen. James Mattis was appointed as the Consolidated Disposition Authority (CDA) for the Haditha case. A CDA is appointed to ensure a consistent handling of similar allegations, and provide centralization of administrative and judicial processing of cases.

After considering all the available evidence, to include statements of witnesses as well as physical evidence, Lt. Gen. Mattis determined that the actions of Maj. Gen. Huck, Col. Davis and Col. Sokoloski, did not constitute violations under the Uniform Code of

Military Justice. The CDA did not find any evidence that these senior officers intended to cover-up the incident. He did determine that their actions, or inactions, demonstrated lack of due diligence on the part of senior commanders and staff.

“Accountability and responsibility are at the foundation of all we do as Marines,” said Gen. James T. Conway, Commandant of the Marine Corps. “While these three officers have served their country and Corps exceedingly well for decades, their actions, inactions, and decisions in the aftermath of the Haditha incident did not meet the high standards we expect of Marine senior officer leadership.

“These administrative sanctions will affect officers who have dedicated their lives to our Corps and country, but they are necessary actions in light of what happened on November 19, 2005, and in the weeks and months following.”

Maj. Gen. Stephen T. Johnson, former commanding general of II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward), has been fully exonerated of any culpability related to the events of Nov. 19.

The Marine Corps has carefully and thoroughly investigated the circumstances of the events of Nov. 19 and follow-on actions. Judicial proceedings associated with the Haditha case remain underway and all Marines are presumed innocent.

“Allegations against all Marines are taken seriously and handled judiciously but they should not detract from the dedication and sacrifice exhibited by Marines, day-in and day-out, at home and abroad,” said Gen. Conway. “The vast majority of Marines continue to serve with bravery, honor and distinction on very complex and challenging battlefields, in Iraq and elsewhere. I remain extremely proud of what they are doing, every day, to win our nation’s battles and uphold the storied legacy of our Corps.”